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# ON MANY ROUTES

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# ON MANY ROUTES

*Internal, European, and Transatlantic  
Migration in the Late  
Habsburg Empire*

**Annemarie Steidl**

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# CONTENTS

<i>Illustrations</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>ix</i>
Introduction	I
1. Back-and-Forth within Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary	23
2. Crossing Inter-European Borders	57
3. Transatlantic Migration Patterns	101
4. On Multiple Routes from, to, and within Central Europe	163
Outlook and Conclusion	211
<i>Notes</i>	<i>221</i>
<i>Bibliography</i>	<i>289</i>
<i>Index</i>	<i>331</i>
<i>About the Author</i>	<i>345</i>

# ILLUSTRATIONS

## FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Population growth gain and loss according to internal migration in the Imperial Austrian provinces, 1870–1910	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 1.2	Spatial distribution of internal out-migration in the Habsburg Empire, 1910 (political districts and counties)	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 1.3	Spatial distribution of internal in-migration in the Habsburg Empire, 1910 (political districts and counties)	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 1.4	Spatial distribution of internal net-migration rates in the Habsburg Empire, 1910 (political districts and counties)	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 1.5	Correlation of in- and out-migration rates for thirty-four urban districts of Imperial Austria, 1910	54
Figure 1.6	Correlation of in- and out-migration rates for thirty urban districts of the Hungarian Kingdom, 1910	55
Figure 2.1	Migrants from the Habsburg Empire in comparison to all foreigners in the German Reich, 1871–1910	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 2.2	Migrants from Imperial Austria in the German Reich, 1885	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 2.3	Number of Hungarian-born people in Imperial Austria, 1857–1910, by gender	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 2.4	Spatial distribution of out-migration from the Kingdom of Hungary and in-migration to Imperial Austria, 1910 (political districts and counties)	<i>center spread</i>

Figure 2.5	Galician-born people living in the Hungarian Kingdom, 1870–1910	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 3.1	Transatlantic migration from the Habsburg Empire in comparison to the German Reich, Great Britain, and the Kingdom of Italy, 1851–1915	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 3.2	Overseas migration from Imperial Austria to different destinations, 1876–1910	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 3.3	Migration from Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary to the United States, 1871–1913	107
Figure 3.4	Spatial distribution of US-migration from the Habsburg Empire, 1910	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 3.5	Ratio of Jewish population in the Habsburg Empire, 1910	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 3.6	Rate of Hungarian migration and return migration to and from the United States in comparison to US unemployment, 1899–1913	<i>center spread</i>
Figure 4.1	Political districts, counties, and towns of Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary, 1910	<i>center spread</i>

## TABLES

Table 1.1	In-migration rates and distribution of migrants in Vienna, Prague, and Trieste, 1910	41
Table 1.2	In-migration rates and distribution of migrants in Budapest, 1910	43
Table 1.3	Austrian and Hungarian towns with the highest in- and out-migration rates, 1910	51
Table 2.1	Migrants from Imperial Austria in the Ottoman Empire and North Africa, 1900	61
Table 2.2	Migrations from Galician Podillja to the Russian Empire, 1892	68
Table 2.3	Imperial Austrian migrants in the German Reich by employment sector, 1885	73
Table 2.4	Employment distribution of migrants from the Habsburg Empire in the German Reich, June 12, 1907	79
Table 2.5	Number of Ukrainian- and Polish-speaking laborers from Imperial Austria in the German Reich, 1905–1914	83
Table 2.6	Population growth and migration to Rijeka, 1870 to 1910	94
Table 3.1	Austro-Hungarian-born US inhabitants, 1850–1920	108
Table 3.2	US migration from the Habsburg Empire by port of embarkation, 1871–1913	116



Table 3.3	Habsburg Empire migrants to the United States by language group, 1902–1911	124
Table 3.4	Migrants from the Habsburg Empire to the United States, 1886–1914	130
Table 3.5	Social and demographic characteristics of Habsburg Empire migrants to the United States, 1880	132
Table 3.6	Repeat US-bound migration from the Habsburg Empire by ethnic group, 1910	157
Table 4.1	Description of dependent and independent variables used in the analysis of Imperial Austria	174
Table 4.2	Descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables used in the analysis of Imperial Austria	175
Table 4.3	Partial correlation for quantitative variables in the Austrian regression analysis	176
Table 4.4	Predicting migration from Imperial Austria to the United States, 1910	178
Table 4.5	Description of dependent and independent variables used in the analysis of the Kingdom of Hungary	182
Table 4.6	Descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables used in the analysis of the Kingdom of Hungary	184
Table 4.7	Partial correlation for quantitative variables in the Hungarian regression analysis	185
Table 4.8	Predicting migration from the Kingdom of Hungary to the United States, 1910	187
Table 4.9	In multiple directions from seven Bohemian districts, 1910 and 1913	192
Table 4.10	Destinations of seasonal migrants from seven Bohemian districts, 1913	194
Table 4.11	International migrants from the Kingdom of Hungary, 1910	198
Table 4.12	In multiple directions from Spiš County in northern Hungary, 1910	200
Table 4.13	Coming and going from and to Vas County, 1910	201
Table 4.14	Coming and going from and to Mureş-Turda and Târgu Mureş, 1910	203
Table 4.15	In multiple directions from Tarnów diocese in Galicia, 1907	206
Table 4.16	European destinations for seasonal migrants from the Tarnów bishopric, 1907	208

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# INTRODUCTION

**H**UMAN MOBILITY HAS the potential to take on a multitude of forms. Individuals move over shorter and longer distances, pass over administrative, geographic, and cultural borders, travel back and forth between rural and urban areas, move to neighboring countries, and even cross oceans. While some migrations consist of a one-time move from one place of residence to another, other movements, even across national borders, are temporary, circular, repetitive. Migrants may leave their home country permanently and remain in one or more host regions for long stretches of time. Migration has been an omnipresent characteristic of all human societies, but can differ considerably in terms of frequency, purpose, distance, intended duration, and individuals involved. While migration might be a rare phenomenon in some societies, spatial movement was not only common in others, but might even have been expected. Migration rates in some regions can be quite high, and more or less absent in others. Over time, different mobility patterns emerge, change, and might disappear in response to changing social, demographic, economic, and political circumstances. Regional mobility within the vast empires of nineteenth-century Europe has proven particularly difficult to classify as internal on the one hand or international on the other. Consider, for example, the up to thirteen million individuals who moved within the Tsarist Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These people bound for Siberia covered thousands of kilometers and crossed into another continent, but even so, scholars usually classify those movements as internal migration.<sup>1</sup> Large migrations might take place between the territories of individual empires, yet other migrations that seemed strictly local or regional in character might cross imperial borders.

Modern social sciences focused on contemporary issues in migration and integration tend to define migration as a move that crosses international borders, and scholars rarely engage in deeper theoretical considerations regarding this definition. According to this rationale, it is the state that produces *real* migrants, who move long distances and cross administrative borders with the intention to settle in foreign countries permanently, or at least for an extended period of time.<sup>2</sup> Scholarly research on migration begins with the establishment of modern nation-states: “Without the formation and existence of modern nation states, there would be no migration and integration research in the sense we know it today.”<sup>3</sup> It is the logic of modern territorial states and their bureaucracies that create categories such as internal and international migration, with administrators in need of clear guidelines by which to classify migrants—to document, tally, and ultimately officially manage these individuals.<sup>4</sup> These administrative classification systems not only obscure the complex daily practices that comprise migration, but diminish the term *migration* itself by defining it in terms of the state. Innovative research approaches should aim to liberate migration studies from national containers, instead finding ways to integrate them within more open conceptions of spatial mobility.<sup>5</sup> As European history has proven, migration was triggered by neither the emergence of nation-states nor nineteenth-century industrialization.<sup>6</sup> Humans were spatially mobile long before official administrators began counting them, but an unprecedented number of individuals left Europe for the Americas between the era of mass migration that spanned from the 1840s to the 1920s.<sup>7</sup>

The term *migration* itself was created to describe a nineteenth-century social phenomenon that took place in the context of empires and developing nation-states. As the administrative focus on this activity was bound by state borders, migration was originally defined as the crossing of administrative borders. Traditional studies have characterized regions, nation-states, and empires as territories of emigration or territories of immigration, and exhibit an inflexible characterization of individuals as either emigrants or immigrants, therewith presuming permanent settlement as the primary grounds and objective of human mobility.<sup>8</sup> However, the definition of migration is far from straightforward. Apart from the fact that migration necessarily involves physical movement through space, there is little further agreement regarding what exactly constitutes migration, and most historical scholars fail to provide precise definitions of what they mean by *migration* and *spatial mobility*. The terms are often used interchangeably, but *mobility* is a more open-ended defined term. It is not easy to draw a strict line between *simple* spatial mobility and *real* migration, be it on analytical or descriptive empirical levels. While international migration can have a particularly profound cultural impact on migrants as well as their receiving countries, and is often accompanied by conflict and integration difficulties, scholars have assumed that spatial mobility was a more common element of everyday life.<sup>9</sup>

In recent years well known migration historians Jan and Leo Lucassen have criticized the absence of precise scientific definitions for migration and mobility, which make it nearly impossible to conduct broader global comparisons across space and time. As a result of these terminological shortcomings, human migrations are mostly absent from broader debates on economic growth, inequality, and social change. In order to overcome nationally confined approaches, these authors plead for an open and integrative definition of migration that allows for the incorporation of international and continental as well as temporary movements, such as seasonal migration within rural regions, the movement of agricultural servants from villages to towns, and those of traveling artisans and highly mobile soldiers during wartime.<sup>10</sup> Janine Dahinden argues that a deeper integration of concepts from mobility studies into migration research would help to loosen strong current associations between the term *migration* and the nation-state logic. The focus of mobility studies is much broader, in that mobility is considered a fundamental aspect of social life, and analysis of the phenomenon takes into consideration a wide spectrum of movements.<sup>11</sup> In his newest research, British historian Colin Pooley is interested in multifaceted linkages and interactions between mobility, migration, and transport technologies, the latter of which is a subject that up until now has largely been neglected by historical migration research. Pooley's focus is on the entanglement of migration and everyday mobility, but still he provides us with no comprehensive definition for his use of those terms. He describes *migration* as a change of residence independent of distance, and *mobility* as daily or short-distance movements, but enters into no further discussion regarding the overlap of the two as characterized by, for instance, nomadic lifestyles.<sup>12</sup>

In this book, I define *migration* in the widest sense, including all changes of residence, irrespective of distance moved or durations of any given stay. A broad definition of *migration* is one that includes all permanent or semipermanent changes of residence with no restriction on distances moved. It can describe short-term and permanent changes of residence, as well as frequently recurrent patterns of seasonal, circular, or permanent mobility, such as vagrants or traveling people.<sup>13</sup> The term *migration* will be applied to international and administrative border crossings, as well as to short-distance and transoceanic movements. Not all movements can be easily characterized as either emigration out of one country or immigration into another. Within the field of migration studies, the definition of permanent settlement is inevitably nebulous, and it can be difficult to establish the intentions behind bygone movements. While transatlantic moves could be permanent, and would by any definition be classified as emigration, some such moves were in fact conceived as temporary periods of overseas employment and were accompanied by an unfailing intention to return to Europe. The differentiation between European emigrants and immigrants to non-European countries needs to be reformulated into a distinction between those Europeans who

permanently settled elsewhere and those who moved back and forth, in some instances even several times.<sup>14</sup> In this book, I speak not of *emigrants* and *immigrants*, terms which suggests one-directional moves in a teleological context, but rather of *migrants*. Studies that focused on the national level, and on immigration or emigration, fail to capture the wide range of moves in which individuals regularly engaged during and before the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> These studies suggest that people are settled and that migration is an exception to the rule, that when spatial mobility occurs the aim is inevitably to create a new situation of settledness. I am convinced, however, that spatial mobility is as ordinary as settledness. The term *migrant*, on the other hand, is much more open and indicates the potential of individuals to move in various directions and assume different modes of mobility at different times. In order to avoid arbitrary distinctions between regions or countries of emigration on one hand and immigration on the other, all spatial mobile individuals will be termed *migrants*.

Administrative state borders were and are subject to and the result of processes of political negotiation.<sup>16</sup> New borders emerge while others disappear; borders themselves are mobile and move across people's homes. The twentieth-century political history of Europe provides ample proof of the creation of new geopolitical borders in the wake of, for example, the post-World War I collapse of four empires, or the formation of nation-states that followed the Yugoslav Wars. Following 1918, hundreds of thousands of Slovene and Italian-speaking seasonal labor migrants whose paths of migration had previously fallen within the Habsburg Empire were suddenly confronted with an international border and status as foreigners, while the previously international movements of Poles from the Kraków/Krakau region who commuted to work as miners or steelworkers in nearby Katowice/Kattowitz in the German Reich, became internal migrants following the formation of a Polish nation-state. In everyday practice, neither public administrations nor migrants themselves always heeded those changes. The emergence of new European nation-states at the beginning of the twentieth century substantially increased the significance of state borders, and within migration research it is important to consider whether spatially mobile individuals themselves perceived the difference between moving within a state or to a neighboring village on the other side of the border.<sup>17</sup> Katrin Lehnert's elaborate study addresses the living and working conditions of individuals living in the border region between Saxony and the Habsburg province of Bohemia during the nineteenth century, and gives special consideration to the way these individuals conceived of the border in the context of the process of modernity. She convincingly describes the lives of individuals who regularly crossed this border, their various practices when dealing with the differing administrations in the two empires, and the agency of all actors involved—be it the migrants themselves or the states and their administrations—in this Upper Lusatia and Bohemian border region.<sup>18</sup>

Social scientists and historians have developed a rich body of studies on the demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural dimensions of regional and global migrations, but this interdisciplinary field continues to be largely divided into analysis of internal and international migrations (be it within or beyond a given continent). These divided fields are characterized by different literatures, concepts, methods, and policy agendas.<sup>19</sup> We continue to cultivate more knowledge about spectacular international long-distance moves, and tend to neglect frequent shorter-distance moves that were more characteristic of everyday lives of nineteenth-century Europeans. Most individuals moved—for a bundle of reasons and with different intentions, without being forced or pushed—from one location to the other. Recent international discussions have shown that internal, European, and overseas migration was not in essence a separate phenomenon, and should be viewed as an aspect of spatial mobility.<sup>20</sup> Regions and countries that have been the source of large-scale out-migration may also experience significant levels of migration within their borders. The massive pre-World War I movement of over 60 million Europeans overseas was itself part of much larger-scale migrations that were taking place within Europe during the same period. In 1910, 1.04 million individuals arrived in the United States of America; 12.5 percent of the individuals comprising the total US population of 92.4 million were foreign-born. That same year, the German Reich, then as now the second-most importer of labor by absolute numbers, experienced an in-migration rate of 0.7 million and an out-migration rate of a similar volume, with nearly 2 percent of the individuals comprising the total German population of 64.9 million being foreign-born.<sup>21</sup> There is no question that transatlantic migration was an important phenomenon during the second half of the nineteenth century; at the same time, however, there were roughly four times as many individuals who moved from Eastern and Southern Europe to Central and Western Europe. In the wake of accelerated urbanization and industrialization that characterized the decades preceding the war, multidirectional labor migrations swept through Central and Eastern Europe. Between the 1870s and 1914, roughly two million Poles left Europe for the direction of the Americas, but even these two million constituted just about one-third of the mass movement of Polish laborers who migrated to other European regions and countries during that period.<sup>22</sup>

Researchers working on migration patterns in the Habsburg Empire have come to similar conclusions, namely that internal migration rates in 1910 were about three times higher than international (both within Europe and overseas) migration rates; only a fraction of these highly mobile individuals traveled to the United States.<sup>23</sup> In light of this overall high mobility, it is important to link all scales of human movement and perspectives—from local to regional, national, and global. In comparing the volume of internal and intra-European migration to that of intercontinental movement, we come to realize that a unidirectional path to the Americas was not even a



paradigm in the late nineteenth century, when transatlantic migratory connections were at their peak.<sup>24</sup> As Hungarian statistician Imre Ferenczi emphasized as early as the 1930s:

Before the World War, the different voluntary internal and international migration patterns did not interfere but instead complemented and replaced each other, according to the law of lowest pressure. The hundred thousand Slovaks, who moved from their mountain homes to the rich Hungarian central plains each year for the harvest, were temporarily replaced by even poorer Ruthenians (Ukrainians), while the Hungarians, attracted by higher wages, migrated seasonally to the German Reich and to Lower Austria. There, they often replaced Czechs, who then turned to America. In this way, the waves of migration, which started as small continental streamlets, often flowed into the large ocean of intercontinental moves.<sup>25</sup>

Migration rates among the Central European population were high at the end of the nineteenth century, but was this really a new phenomenon? Historical migration research has traditionally assumed that there was a link between spatial mobility and modernity. The Industrial Revolution is supposed to have acted as the means of detaching a largely rural population from the land, and transforming those formerly sedentary individuals into restless wanderers. Rural dwellers were believed to have been irreversibly drawn into growing urban agglomerations, inaugurating a transition from traditional agricultural societies to modern, industrialized, and urbanized societies.<sup>26</sup> Much of this approach has been based on Wilbur Zelinsky's 1971 paper in which he developed the idea of a European "mobility transition" from an "immobile pre-modernity" to a "mobile modernity."<sup>27</sup> Historians have long criticized Zelinsky's concept of "mobility transition."<sup>28</sup> Today, migration scholars are questioning this notion of a sedentary preindustrial Europe and the traditional emphasis on the disruptive nature of modern migrations, arguing instead in favor of a society characterized by a high level of internal and international mobility. In recent decades new theoretical approaches and important shifts in the study of international migrations have begun to emerge that understand European spatial movements during industrialization not as exceptional, but rather as historical processes embedded within larger migration pattern contexts that have existed for centuries.<sup>29</sup>

Recently, Jan and Leo Lucassen have collected a massive amount of data on European cross-cultural migrations that have taken place between 1500 and 2000. Their data show that early modern European spatial mobility was indeed much more widespread than traditionally assumed, and that the apparent increase in migration rates during industrialization resulted from improved transportation technologies, such as railways and steamships.<sup>30</sup> Even transatlantic voyages can be interpreted as extensions and

augmentations of spatial mobilities that had existed for centuries. Migration rates were considerable well before industrialization, and only slightly lower than the high levels that characterize the first decade of the twenty-first century. In response to their tremendous work, Josef Ehmer has suggested that even their broad methodical approach may underestimate premodern migration rates, and that the inclusion of rural to rural moves may well reveal even higher levels of short-distance mobility.<sup>31</sup> Human migration is an ongoing process shaped by social, economic, and cultural frameworks. Spatial mobility is a phenomenon that has occurred throughout time and human cultures, and migration rates were already high in premodern Europe. In the process of managing their everyday lives, individuals moved around their home districts, crossed provincial borders, and even made their ways to neighboring countries. Pooley characterizes humans as “naturally restless creatures.”<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, up until the end of the nineteenth century, the majority of individuals in Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary would have considered transatlantic travel an exceptional circumstance.

My own approach assumes a high interdependence between and entanglement of various patterns of human movement. This book will explore the dynamics of internal, European, and transatlantic migration as well as the connections between these patterns, and it will link these to the broader movement of Central Europeans from the middle of the nineteenth to the first decades of the twentieth centuries. During the era of the late Habsburg Empire, movements from rural to urban areas or vice versa, internally or over state borders, and transcontinentally were fundamentally interrelated phenomena. My aim is to systematically reconstruct all of the types and patterns of spatial mobility that occurred within and between the two administrative units comprised of Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary, as well as from these to neighboring European countries and across the Atlantic, in particular the United States of America. By analyzing socioeconomic and demographic patterns and consequences of migration within Central Europe, to other European regions, and to the United States in broad comparative terms, and with the help of mostly quantitative methods, this book departs from much of the previous research and provides a model for studying spatial mobility as a multifaceted historical process that includes the different types of migration that developed within a specific region over time.

Traditional European migration research tends to focus on the experiences of individual ethnolinguistic or national groups, often within restricted geographic territories and short periods of time, and lacks broader comparative dimensions. For more than a century, migration studies and the social sciences as a whole have been dominated by a kind of “methodological nationalism.” Within the field of migration studies, this tendency has been reinforced by the fact that migration scholars often have relied on sources produced by the individual state administrations. Historians working on the history of European migration to the United States have likewise tended

to focus on individual national groups—a choice facilitated or even dictated by the categories that governments and immigration administrators created to organize their statistical data.<sup>33</sup> These categories often helped to reify and naturalize national categories rooted in nineteenth-century racialist thinking.<sup>34</sup> Scholarly fixation on the histories of individual nations and state boundaries has resulted in a strict classification of migration types, such as internal, transatlantic, emigration, and immigration. Given these scientific shortcomings, our knowledge of internal and transatlantic movement is more developed than that regarding international migration that has taken place within Europe. Since the turn of the century, this nation-state historiography has come under increased criticism.<sup>35</sup> Innovative scholars have begun to develop new theoretical approaches and methods that counterbalance the nation-state-dominated historiography and support a more “transnational historiography.”<sup>36</sup> Transmigration, originally defined as a historically new phenomenon, which appears only marginally if at all in the past, now appears as a critical factor in overseas migration circa 1900.<sup>37</sup> Some authors even predict that the history of transnational movement will form a locus of the new social history of Europe.<sup>38</sup>

Given the numerous historical studies we have on European migration patterns during industrialization, including a considerable body of work on transatlantic moves from Central Europe, it is rather surprising that the state of international research remained biased until just recently: we have long known substantially more about historical migration patterns in Western Europe than we have known about patterns in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>39</sup> Historiographical surveys that claim to address Europe as a whole tend to predominantly concentrate on migrants in the west or northwest. Important topics such as regional variations and migrants’ multiple connections beyond the North Atlantic space remained relatively unexplored by historians.<sup>40</sup> The reasons for this lack of focus on migration in Central and Eastern Europe are rooted in a widespread knowledge transfer disconnect between Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. The spatial mobility of Eastern Europeans is usually underestimated as a result of presumed restrictions on migration during the era of “second serfdom” and the gradual process of industrialization that followed.<sup>41</sup> In reality, around 1900, East Central Europe formed the greatest reservoir of inexpensive labor for commercialized agriculture and the growing industrial sectors of Western Europe and North America. Nonetheless, international research has only recently begun to expand its focus to include Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>42</sup>

In their recent study on the multiple types of migration that took place in twentieth-century Russia during this era of ongoing political transformation, Leslie Page Moch and Lewis Siegelbaum analyze how the movements of the country’s population, be they forced or voluntary, influenced Russian society in ways that have remained for the most part unnoticed by the general public and scientific research alike. With

past research into Russia's migrants overwhelmingly focused on early twentieth-century international movements to the Americas and Western Europe on one hand, or on Soviet-era deportations on the other, the authors broaden our understanding of the many migration roads and paths that existed within the enormous Russian territory. As the authors show, classifications between internal and international patterns were blurred, individuals required passports and other travel documents for journeys from one Russian region to another, and given the high level of ethnic and linguistic diversity, migrating from one region to another might feel as if one had traveled to another country anyway. According to the authors' analysis of migrants' agency, the dichotomy between internal and international spatial mobility is quickly losing its explanatory value for modern migration research.<sup>43</sup>

The overwhelming focus of recent studies on mobile Central Europeans is still on international and transcontinental migrations, a fact that is largely due to the assumption that these movements would have a deeper impact on these societies, while short-distance everyday movements were presumed as having little impact on economies and political cultures. Ulf Brunnbauer's recent book on the global migration patterns of Southeastern Europeans focuses on ongoing connections between historical movements and their effect on concurrent migration in light of the late nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century political transformation of the region. From 1890 to 1914, nearly 200,000 individuals left Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia for North America, but that era is in truth a relatively short episode in the long and extremely diverse migration history of Southeastern Europe.<sup>44</sup> From the middle of the nineteenth century onward, Balkan men and women moved to North Africa—Alexandria and Cairo—to work as construction workers on the Suez Canal and as domestic servants in middle-class households.<sup>45</sup> Brunnbauer connects new transcontinental labor migration routes to traditional patterns of seasonal movement within Habsburg-ruled territories, and emphasizes the similarities between turn-of-the-century movements along the Dalmatian Coast to North Africa and across the Atlantic. Depending on the distances covered, spatial mobility has the potential to have quite different implications for migrants, their families, and the societies in their countries of origin and destination.<sup>46</sup>

Tara Zahra's study on the international movements of Central and Eastern European populations from the late nineteenth century up until the 1990s presents an integrative approach to mobility, be it a result of work, deportation, or flight. Her analysis focuses on millions of transatlantic workers, Jews who fled pogroms and National Socialist persecution, the German-speaking populations who were expelled from Eastern Europe following World War II, Cold War-era deserters, and young Polish laborers who moved west after the fall of the Iron Curtain.<sup>47</sup> Zahra discusses complex entanglements of deported and displaced individuals, refugees, and other migrants, and analyzes how states and other transnational organizations bureaucratically managed

these individuals. While governmental institutions at the national and supranational level attempt to draw sharp distinctions between political and economic migrants, we have decades of studies that demonstrate that the motivations that drive migration are highly complex and entangled.<sup>48</sup>

Kristina Evans Poznan's recent doctoral dissertation also addresses transatlantic migrations from the Habsburg Empire; however, her primary interest is how the processes of identity transformations were experienced by what were originally multilingual migrants upon arrival in the United States, in the context of complicated international relations. She has convincingly demonstrated that transatlantic migration and migrants' heightened awareness regarding national belonging had serious implications with regard to the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire into nation-states after World War I.<sup>49</sup> Nicole Phelps recently authored a major study of US relations with the Habsburg Empire between 1815 and 1918. The primary focus of her study is on diplomatic relations, but as a result of the late nineteenth-century increase of US-bound migration from Habsburg-ruled territories, she necessarily addresses migration. As she has shown, American consuls in the empire were often confronted with issues of citizenship, and were responsible for protecting naturalized transatlantic migrants who were pressed into Habsburg military service following their return to Europe, in particular on the eve of World War I. Travel was comparatively inexpensive in the early twentieth century, meaning that thousands of Habsburg migrants returned for business and personal reasons.<sup>50</sup>

Comparative evaluations of states and nations have allowed migration research to overcome the limitations of national historiography and the self-referential evaluations thereof. As Dirk Hoerder contends, migration needs to be viewed as part of a worldwide migration system and as the life project of individuals and families on trajectories between cultural spaces.<sup>51</sup> Certain regions (rather than countries) were targets of movement, and regions are the best level to study migrations because the vast majority of human movement occurred within regions. Movements within a region, even when intersected by national borders, might still be referred to as *internal migration*.<sup>52</sup> Migration networks between two regions frequently developed as a result of shared socioeconomic systems; such regions—even when separated by national borders—often formed integrated labor markets. Jan Lucassen's widely acclaimed concept of "migration systems," developed to describe continuous and long-standing networks between two or more regions, appears frequently in recent international migration research.<sup>53</sup> My own methodical approach is limited, in certain senses, by the necessity of working within the source-dictated confines of the Habsburg Empire as a nation-state. Most of the documents used in the following analysis are official statistics generated by administrators in Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary. In contemporary Austria, international migration has been a subject of special interest for more than a decade at least, but despite growing interest in

European migration research, we have few recent historiographies on the subject from Austrian historians.<sup>54</sup> I plan to fill in this gap in the research, and more importantly, to foster a more engaged discourse between individual, nationally oriented migration studies that, in their isolation from one another, tend to underestimate the importance of past international movements between neighboring European states.

## IMPERIAL AUSTRIA AND THE KINGDOM OF HUNGARY—THE TERRITORIES UNDER ANALYSIS

From the late seventeenth century up until the end of World War I, the Habsburg-ruled territories comprised one of Europe's vast empires. As a multinational state, we know that it displayed a high level of social and cultural diversity, in particular following the rise in national consciousness from the 1870s onward.<sup>55</sup> Administration of the empire was likewise complex. Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary were two quasi-states that enjoyed considerable autonomy, and within each, the former in particular, local and regional political institutions exercised greater authority than did the central government.<sup>56</sup>

The Habsburg provinces and lands exhibited a broad range of economic development, and despite the relatively early onset of industrialization, the empire has nevertheless often been described as economically "backward" as a result of its comparatively slow nineteenth-century economic growth.<sup>57</sup> This growth, in both the industrial and agricultural sectors, was strongly determined by regional economic processes. There was a large socioeconomic gap between the more technologically advanced western regions and the less industrialized areas in the east and southeast of the empire. Income and industrialization levels in the Alpine and Bohemian Lands were one and a half times higher than those of the southern lands, and twice those of the Hungarian territories. The diffusion of industrial development throughout the eastward regions quickened after the mid-nineteenth century, and by the 1870s sustained growth became noticeable throughout most of the Hungarian lands. By the 1900s, limited industrialization was apparent in the far reaches of the eastern provinces and lands of Imperial Austria as well as the Kingdom of Hungary, and economic growth began to penetrate Transylvania, Galicia, and Bukovina. This slow economic progress notwithstanding, Habsburg Empire economies grew more rapidly in the late nineteenth century than those of most other European countries and, until 1914, even the comparatively limited industrial output of Croatia-Slavonia and Transylvania tended to be higher than that of their neighbor countries to the southeast.<sup>58</sup>

Circa 1900 the empire, and Imperial Austria in particular, was one of Europe's most socioeconomically inhomogeneous states. While during the second half of the nineteenth century there were some Austrian territories that ranked among the most highly industrialized regions in continental Europe, others continued to be rather agricultural, and remained little affected by industry. The Czech Lands and the provinces of Bukovina and Dalmatia lie at opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of economic development. Within the former, the northern districts of Bohemia and parts of Moravia and Austrian Silesia had undergone an early transition to mechanized production, and formed the empire's industrial core. Around 1900, the northwestern districts of Bohemia (Erzgebirge) were characterized by high levels of urbanization and industrialization as a result of brown coal mining.<sup>59</sup> Other regions of concentrated industrial production included the areas surrounding the cities of Prague, Plzeň, and Ostrava/Ostrau in Moravia.<sup>60</sup>

Vienna and its environs were also important industrial centers, albeit dominated by small-scale production. The southern regions of the empire, including Trieste and the province of Carniola, had undergone early industrial development during the first half of the nineteenth century, and by the end of that century the number of laborers employed in agriculture had dropped to about two-thirds, but the Dalmatian economy continued to be predominantly agricultural.<sup>61</sup> With the exception of the westernmost part of the empire (Vorarlberg) and a few industrialized provincial cities and areas such as northern Styria, agriculture continued as the major economic activity in the Austrian territories into the early twentieth century. Galicia, Bukovina, and Dalmatia were the least economically developed regions. The livelihoods of nearly 80 percent of all peasants in these three provinces, for example, were dependent on parcels of farmland comprising no more than five hectares. Compared with other Polish territories in the German Reich and the Russian Empire, Galicia was the least economically developed, and it was only at the end of the nineteenth century that newly built railroads, which facilitated trade with other Habsburg regions, brought economic growth to the region.<sup>62</sup>

The Hungarian Kingdom has often been characterized as a "late bloomer" with regard to most aspects of economic and technological development.<sup>63</sup> By Western standards and in comparison to Imperial Austria, the Kingdom remained economically underdeveloped—in many respects still feudal—for most of the nineteenth century. The same regional disparities that characterized the empire as a whole were more or less present in the Hungarian Kingdom as well. Within the Habsburg-ruled territories the role of the Hungarian lands had, since the eighteenth century, been that of supplier of agricultural commodities. By the mid-nineteenth century the rate of industrialization there was still low, with up to 85 percent of the population reliant on agriculture, while just half a million of its thirteen million inhabitants had found employment in mining, industry, commerce, or transport.<sup>64</sup>



The revolution of 1848/49, which introduced legal equality and property ownership for all male citizens, also served to initiate the modernization of the Hungarian territories. In the wake of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (*Ausgleich*) of 1867, the multinational Hungarian Kingdom became a single constitutional unit. The Austro-Hungarian Compromise marked the beginning of industrialization in the kingdom, and a food industry (e.g., flour milling, sugar refineries, alcoholic beverages) began to take shape in parts of the country. The new political, economic, and social order that characterized the second half of the nineteenth century did not immediately result in new ownership structures. The switch from a feudal to a mixed agrarian-industrial society resulted in an extremely uneven distribution of land, with a few thousand families controlling more than half of the country's territory, while nearly 70 percent of Hungary's rural population owned plots of land too small to provide for their maintenance.<sup>65</sup> Between 1880 and 1910, the number of factory workers in the Kingdom more than doubled, and the number of individuals working in manufacturing nearly tripled. Agricultural production also underwent industrialization; between 1840 and the 1890s crop production trebled, and by the end of the century Hungary's most dynamic leading economic sector was export-oriented agriculture. As early as 1848, two-thirds of all Hungarian sugar beets were being produced in the northern lands, which had largely been settled by Slovak speakers.<sup>66</sup>

The Hungarian Kingdom followed its own uneven pattern of economic progress, and in 1906, the wage levels of agricultural day laborers were still distinctly higher in the south than in the north and east.<sup>67</sup> Industrialization arrived earliest in the interior Hungary, with Budapest in its center, somewhat later to the northeastern territories (contemporary Slovakia) and Croatia-Slavonia, and last to Transylvania (contemporary Romania). By 1890, the economically less developed areas of Hungary's east, not to mention western and central Hungary, had reached higher levels of industrial development than Galicia and Bukovina.<sup>68</sup> Between 1870 and World War I, the Hungarian population, including Croatia-Slavonia, increased from 15.5 to 20.9 million individuals, resulting in a sudden rise in the number of young men and women in need of employment. The majority of the rural population was in need of income to supplement agricultural labor, and nearly 25 percent of these individuals were freely wandering laborers who owned no property. The late introduction and limited nature of industrialization in the Kingdom of Hungary created a disparity between supply and demand of laborers, men as well as women, and initiated even more movement within the country, as well as the arrival of labor migrants from other European regions.

In the year 1910, the vast territories of Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary, with a population of more than 51 million individuals, could hardly be described as a nation-state. Its inhabitants spoke at least ten official languages in addition to many others such as Yiddish, Latin, and Aromanian, and followed a variety of religions and



denominations, among which Roman-Catholic, Protestant, Serbian-Orthodox, and Jewish were the most dominant, and was characterized by broad socioeconomic and cultural diversity. German and Hungarian speakers were always the politically dominant groups.<sup>69</sup> In Budapest, for example, announcements for labor organization meetings were usually published in four or five languages.<sup>70</sup> The Habsburg population was multilingual, and many individuals were capable of communicating in two or even several languages. Multilingualism was a fact of everyday life for migrants from Imperial Austria and the Hungarian Kingdom, and religious and regional belonging were far more salient for most migrants than ethnolinguistic belonging, especially those from rural areas.<sup>71</sup>

In this book, I will attempt, as much as possible, to refrain from using terms such as *ethnicity* or *ethnic identity*, as I have no wish to proceed from the premature assumption that any given individual or group of individuals naturally belongs to any state-defined group. As genetic research did not begin developing until the early twentieth century, “race” was more often understood as a conflation of ethnic, linguistic, and national characteristics rather than the biological associations with the term that began to take hold in the 1920s. Most often, ethnolinguistic and ethnoconfessional groups had little in common with individuals’ senses of belonging, but were rather definitions created and projected as a result of the interests of national governments. As Rogers Brubaker argues, we should be careful not to conflate classification systems with the actual existence of ethnic groups, because the institutionalization of ethnolinguistic and ethnoconfessional categories also cannot tell us anything about the extent to which these groupings resonated with the broader public.<sup>72</sup> It is not my goal here to investigate or define ethnolinguistic or ethnoconfessional group assignments in more detail, and thus I will provide little reflexive discussion regarding these important issues of which there is a great deal of existing literature;<sup>73</sup> rather, the goal here is to take the sources available, concurrent group assignments included, in order to analyze and compare differences in migration behaviors of people in the Habsburg Empire.

Ethnolinguistic and ethnoconfessional groups comprising the Habsburg Empire took shape as the result of the conscious efforts of individuals and entities, official administrations, national censuses, and ethnic leaders (such as politicians, priests, or writers), who consolidated, managed, and maintained them.<sup>74</sup> I am aware, of course, that in choosing census surveys and other statistical material created by state officials as the basis for this research, the scientific analysis will in some senses serve to perpetuate these artificially constructed ethnolinguistic and ethnoconfessional groups. To understand the public management of these groups, especially on both sides of the Atlantic, we have to keep in mind that Habsburg and US American administrations used different logics when recording its inhabitants.<sup>75</sup> Ethnolinguistic and ethnoconfessional groups created by the Austrian and Hungarian administrations were, for example, also

based on religious affiliations, while the US administration based its national attribution of migrants on mother tongue.<sup>76</sup> Chapter 4 will provide a descriptive example of these different logics for Jewish and Yiddish-speaking migrants.

The multifaceted migration patterns of the Habsburg population provide an excellent field for a comparative study. At the beginning of the twentieth century, no less than one-third of the adult agrarian population of the vast Central European territory that included Hungary proper, the Slovak territories, Transylvania, Croatia-Slavonia, the Austrian provinces of Galicia, Bukovina, and the Mediterranean provinces (Carniola, Littoral, and Dalmatia) had lived or worked in places other than those of their birth.<sup>77</sup>

THIS BOOK REFERENCES many places within and beyond the Habsburg Empire. In acknowledgement of the range of languages spoken within the different regions comprising the empire's territories, place names will often be given in more than one language. As a rule, all places are referred to using the current name used in the primary language of the country in which it today resides, with the exception of major towns and capitals, such as Vienna and Prague, which have English-language names. Upon initial reference to a place, its contemporary name is given first, with its historical name in either German or Hungarian given second, such as Locket/Elbogen or Košice/Kassa. In recognition of the many languages spoken in some regions there are also some instances in which a third name of the location in another prominent language spoken there at that time is also given, such as Trieste/Triest/Trst or Bratislava/Pozsony/Pressburg. All subsequent references to each location, and all tables and graphs, will utilize only its current name. With regard to locations outside the empire, the current spelling is given, followed by its German or, if it exists, English translation, such as Poznań/Posen.

## METHOD AND DATA

The analyses in this book predominantly take a quantitative approach, and in as far as the sources render it possible, I seek to transcend simple descriptive statistical methods. Relationships between internal, continental, and transatlantic migration will be tested by means of multiple regression models. Cartographic maps are furthermore used as a research tool. The complex relationships between migration paths are oftentimes most clearly conveyed by visual representations.<sup>78</sup> The intention of this macro-level focus and quantitative approach is not intended to revive the rather materialistic structuralism of the "old" social history, or to deny the indispensable contributions of new perspectives in migration history since the 1980s.<sup>79</sup> Rather, in linking migration to economic,

social, and cultural characteristics, the intention is to cultivate a more complete understanding of the timing, selectivity, and nature of various migration patterns. There are some questions that can only be answered by numbers.

A range of quantitative sources will be utilized in this systematic analysis of the spectrum of migration types that occurred in Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary. The principle resource that will be used to provide insight into internal migration will be the published results of the official censuses from 1869 to 1910 taken by the Austrian and Hungarian administrations.<sup>80</sup> These will be supplemented by census materials from neighboring states, in particular data from the 1910 population census taken by the German Reich.<sup>81</sup> While censuses provide insight into the movement of the population within a given state territory, movements beyond that territory remain largely neglected. In this sense, the volume on the international movement of Hungary's population, published by the Hungarian Statistical Office in 1918, which provides data on European and US migration, can be considered a particularly valuable resource.<sup>82</sup> In many respects, the history of Europe's transatlantic migration is more thoroughly researched than its history of internal migration. One reason for this is the survival of a more detailed and complete range of sources. Analysis of transatlantic migration to the United States from Imperial Austria is based on a sample of 1910 ship passenger manifests from Bremen and Hamburg to New York.<sup>83</sup> The collections of systematic data that describe the Hungarian and Austrian population will be complemented by smaller regional surveys, including statistics on seasonal migration from the province of Bohemia in 1913, and a 1907 questionnaire sent out by the Polish Catholic Church to gather information regarding the international movement of individuals from the bishopric of Tarnów/Tarnau in Western Galicia.<sup>84</sup>

I should stress here that the analyses in the present volume are largely dependent on the same official statistics used in the past by other researchers, and that we need to recognize the limitations of these resources. First of all, the statistical analysis is based on a mix of stock and flow data. The stock data utilized here were recorded by state administrations, while flow data were compiled by public statistical offices as well as religious organizations, transatlantic shipping companies, and the US Immigration Office, and were therefore recorded for a variety of different reasons and uses. All statistics were designed for purposes other than historical migration research. Those who produced the sources were, almost without exception, not concerned with explaining why individuals moved, and thus the explanatory and contextual evidence these statistics are capable of providing with regard to migration is necessarily limited.

Population registries and censuses taken by state authorities are examples of stock data that provide us with a snapshot of a particular moment in time and the size, demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural composition of a given population. These are rather poor substitutes for everyday practices of internal migrants, conflating

long-distance moves from one part of Imperial Austria and the Hungarian Kingdom to another, with short-distance moves across boundaries of political districts and counties, ignoring movements within districts and counties, and giving no inkling of individuals' residential histories. Censuses—the most common form of stock data—were taken in the Habsburg Empire at fixed, rather lengthy intervals of ten years, and thus neglect movements that took place between those ten-year periods; they were never simple measures of net migration, but rather a complex composite reflecting a wide array of population dynamics. European states commenced census taking at different times in history and administered their surveys at different intervals. Questions contained in these different national censuses and the resulting data are far from uniform—especially with regard to the interpretation of information applying to countries other than their own. In addition, Central European censuses rarely provide insight regarding nonpermanent seasonal migration because, with few exceptions, they were carried out in winter,<sup>85</sup> while seasonal migration peaked in the spring and summer. Even the 1907 census of the German Reich, carried out in June, was taken too early to capture the actual annual number of employed foreigners, which was at its height in late summer.<sup>86</sup>

Even this flawed evidence, however, offers indication of the extent to which individuals were mobile in the past, and demonstrates that migration was a common experience for a large proportion of the Austro-Hungarian population.<sup>87</sup> Censuses provide complete spatial coverage of data on all Habsburg territories, but the nature and quality of this information varies from census to census, and in calculating mobility rates from population figures we run the risk of uncovering just one dimension of the many layers comprising migration processes. For much of their history, the published censuses from Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary collected data that can be used for migration research only indirectly, in the form of individuals' places of birth and their places of residence on census night. Thus, these censuses record the gross movement of individuals from their places of birth to their residences at an arbitrary point of their lives, again presenting a random snapshot of gross movement rather than a more complete picture of lifetime migration.

International migration cannot be studied in depth on the sole basis of censuses from a single empire (i.e., Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary). While censuses created by empires or nation-states lend themselves to detailed and systematic analysis of people arriving from foreign countries even on a district level, this method is insufficient for the analysis of citizens leaving the country. Out-migration from districts was documented only in instances in which borders of the empire were *not* crossed. Because censuses fracture the depiction of existing migration relationships between regions at state borders, they are only capable of depicting sections of larger historical migration networks. International moves, both within Europe and transatlantic, will therefore be measured using flow data with one exception: information on

movements between Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary will be taken from census stock data, because the censuses of each recorded individuals born in the other who were found to be living in one of their administrative units (political districts or counties) on census night.

Flow data is somewhat different from stock data compiled by censuses. While stock data measures people, flow data measures migrations. Flow data enumerates entries, exits, embarkations, disembarkations, emigrations, and immigrations of mobile individuals, typically counted at the beginning or end of a journey or voyage, as in the case of transatlantic migrants. Flow data counts bodies on the move, and observes or estimates their characteristics as they cross a border. Most surveys of flow data collect numbers on border crossers over a specific period of time. Instead of individual moves, flow data measures gross mobility, recognizing that an individual may cross a border more than once, traveling in multiple directions and being counted at each border. When migrations are seasonal, circular or repeated, and multidirectional, as was the case of most regional mobility in Central Europe, flow data exaggerates both the total number of migrants and the number of individuals who transfer more permanently from one place to another.<sup>88</sup> Although historical flow data is by no means perfect, there are no alternative sources to measure international moves for the whole Habsburg Empire.

While passenger ships manifests, collected by US immigration authorities and stored in the National Archives in Washington, DC, and New York, have long been used as sources in migration studies, we have little research on transatlantic voyages from the Habsburg Empire to the United States that has made use of these documents.<sup>89</sup> Since nearly two-thirds of all migrants from Austria-Hungary chose a German port for their transatlantic move, information on all passengers aboard twenty *Norddeutsche Lloyd* ships leaving Europe from Bremen, and two *Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft* ships in 1910 were stored in a database.<sup>90</sup> Since 1910 was a census year for Imperial Austria, the Kingdom of Hungary, and the United States, we chose the sample of passenger lists in the same year for the database. Every ship entering a United States port has been required to submit manifests with a list of all passengers aboard the vessel since the 1819 Manifest of Immigration Act. Initially, these manifests recorded just basic details, such as name, sex, age, and occupation. Over time, the lists expanded to include more details, among them the nationality of each passenger based on their country of origin. In 1899 it became customary, and in 1903 mandatory, to report one's ethnicity and last place of residence.<sup>91</sup> By choosing a sample of these manifests from the first decade of the twentieth century, I have been able to avoid problems that have occurred in transatlantic migration studies in the second half of the nineteenth century based on American passenger records.<sup>92</sup> In addition to each individual's name, date of arrival, sex, age, marital status, professional qualifications, and information regarding accompanying family members, the records also contain information

regarding spatial mobility. Upon arrival in the United States, migrants were asked to name their birthplace, last place of residence, and the addresses of their closest relatives in Europe, as well as those of relatives and friends who had previously migrated to the United States. As an example: Wilhelm Kaestl, an unmarried, twenty-seven-year-old beer brewer left Europe from Bremerhaven on the SS *Kronprinz Wilhelm* on May 18, 1910. He had been born in Munich and named Plzeň/Pilsen in Bohemia as his last place of residence. He gave the name of his father, Andreas Kaestl, who was a resident of the small village of Anif, just outside the city of Salzburg, for his nearest European relative. In the United States, he intended to move to Chicago, where he was supposed to meet a friend.<sup>93</sup>

At the first decade of the twentieth century, transatlantic ships from Europe to the Americas accommodated between 500 and 2,000 passengers, and the passage lasted between seven and ten days. My own 1910 sample of ships' records includes data for 23,996 individuals.<sup>94</sup> For the purposes of this study, I have excluded all passengers who did not hail from Imperial Austria and whose last place of residence could not be identified. The size of the remaining sample is 5,966 passengers, which accounts for approximately 5 percent of the total migration from Imperial Austria to the United States in 1910. About 5,600 of the remaining passengers originated from the Kingdom of Hungary, nearly 2,000 were citizens of the German Reich, and about 1,600 left from the Russian Empire en route to the United States.

The statistical office in the Hungarian Kingdom systematically collected stock and flow data on all individuals under Hungarian rule from 1899 to 1913.<sup>95</sup> The administration was primarily concerned with transatlantic migration, but also collected data on movements to other European countries. The basic geographical unit for this data was the county (*comitatus*), and the previously described special migration volume provides elaborate statistics on migration and return migration in all seventy-one Hungarian counties. The analyses of international movements, be they within Europe or overseas, are based on this collection of data.

## VOLUME OUTLINE

It is not always easy to distinguish between internal, continental, and transatlantic migration paths; however, the chapters in this volume have, with few exceptions, been organized along the lines of these traditional classifications of migration types. The chapters are more or less distinguished by the different stock and flow data used for the analyses. In addition, findings on Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary presented in each chapter will be compared and contrasted with relevant secondary literature on other parts of Europe.

The manuscript is divided into four chapters. Following this introduction, the first chapter presents the long history of internal migration within Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary. It is important that readers understand that inhabitants of Austria-Hungary had a centuries-long history of interacting with many different peoples and nationalities. That history of moving for work opportunities was the essential backdrop that informed the decisions made by millions of Europeans at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to move some six thousand kilometers across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas for more enticing employment opportunities. This chapter, which is based on the Austrian and the Hungarian censuses, will provide a broad overview of mobility patterns employed by individuals from both parts of the Habsburg Empire. During the second half of the nineteenth century, urbanization was a characteristic process in Austria-Hungary, but not all movements were from rural to urban areas. This chapter will also challenge traditional approaches that argue that the move to the city was the dominant form of mobility associated with industrialization.

In the second chapter, I take a closer look at the international destinations of migrants from Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary. The movements of Central European laborers to neighboring countries were the most numerically conspicuous paths, but Habsburg citizens can be found in all European regions, and women even traveled unaccompanied as far as Egypt. This chapter will present international migration as a regional phenomenon, including the circular and seasonal wandering of laborers around the predominantly German-speaking greater region of Switzerland, Baden, Swabia, Tyrol, and Vorarlberg, or the movements of the Galician agricultural population around the Galician region of Podolia and Russian territories that today comprise parts of Ukraine. Most women and men involved in agricultural and industrial labor moved in circular, temporary patterns to other European countries and often returned for the winter months. In this chapter I am thus mindful of the high frequency of seasonal migrations during the nineteenth century. The Austrian and Hungarian administrations treated movements between the two parts of the empire as international border crossings, so I will pay attention to the large number of Austrian and Hungarian citizens who moved to one or the other parts of the empire. Many Habsburg inhabitants left the country temporarily or for good, but at the same time these territories also attracted migrants from other European countries. In the last portion of this chapter I present an overview of migration into Habsburg territories, with a special emphasis on Italian-speaking individuals from both within Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Italy.

The third chapter will take a closer look at the transatlantic migrations of inhabitants of Austria-Hungary, and will discuss the onset of increased transcontinental movement, as well as the overseas migrations of nearly four million individuals from



the 1850s up until World War I by region of origin. As a historian, I stress the importance of chronology—time—in uncovering the quantitative history of millions of migrants. The analysis of sources ranging from Hungarian statistics to ship passenger manifests demonstrates that there was a chronology for the arrival of different groups of Austro-Hungarian migrants in the United States. The first migrants came between 1850 and 1890, from the Bohemian Lands in particular, and settled in both urban agglomerations and in the countryside, where they began climbing the agricultural ladder to family farm ownership. The second and larger groups of migrants from Imperial Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary arrived after 1890, especially following the 1893–1896 economic slump in the United States. While from predominantly agricultural origins, these newcomers rarely sought or obtained US farmland to rent or to buy. Instead, these men and women overwhelmingly found work in cities and rural mining districts as wage laborers in US industry. When considering individuals' decisions to migrate transatlantically, we must also think about their intentions with regard to return, which fundamentally inform the shape of the migration plan itself. I therefore close this chapter with a look at the bounded profit to be gained from the use of terms such as *emigration* and *immigration* when up to 40 percent of Austro-Hungarian migrants to the United States returned to Central Europe.

In the fourth chapter, I move away from studying single migration patterns to look instead at the entangled quality of mobility types. The chapter begins with a historiography of concepts of connectivity between migration patterns since the second half of the twentieth century. I use methods from inferential statistics, such as multiple regression analysis, to test the impacts of internal and European migration patterns on migration to the United States. In the early twentieth century, relations between internal and international migration in both Imperial Austria and the Hungarian Kingdom were highly complex, the results of inferential statistics have their limits, and findings present a mixed picture of the connections between various migration patterns. I therefore pay particular attention to local migration patterns, and present descriptive case studies that help elaborate our understanding of how these various types of movement intermingled within individual regions. The conclusion discusses the results of the study and provides an outlook on changes in European migration patterns during the interwar period.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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